

**From:** Abe Gindi  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
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To US Department of Justice:

There is only one way to prevent Microsoft from using Windows Operating System to its own advantage over its competitors. When Microsoft incorporates its own application software into Windows, it does it by means of an unconventional interface that it calls "seamless" while forbidding others from doing the same thing through the licensing agreement which all users must sign. The solution is to force Microsoft to use the same Windows interface that all others must use and to redefine the interface such that it can be more efficient and generally usable by all potential users. Microsoft intentionally made the interface clumsy and inefficient to the disadvantage of its competitors.

History shows us that this is the best way to solve the problem. IBM had two major interfaces that it was forced to standardize by the anti-trust consent decrees. These are the Disk drive or peripheral component interface, and the channel interface. When disk drive manufacturers succeeded in making plug compatible drives in competition with IBM, IBM made a change to the interface that would have forced manufacturers to make an expensive change to their inventories in order to be plug compatible. IBM was forced through anti-trust action to reverse the change and to make the interface standard. A similar case was made with the channel interface that connects the drive control unit to the CPU channel.

Although IBM complained that standardizing the interface would not allow for improvements and future innovations, the standard channel interface allowed plug compatible competitors to build their own control units to connect to IBM computers. The conditions were that any improvements that IBM made in the future had to be such that the interface continued to be backward compatible. That is old hardware was able to connect to the new improved interface without any changes.

I recently had a similar problem with Windows software. A few years ago, I had some very important software that worked with Windows 3.1. An important improvement was made in a new release of this software but the new release was only compatible with Windows 98. I had to upgrade to Windows 98 in order to use the new release of the software. If the rule of backward compatibility were in force, I could have stayed with my Windows 3.1.

The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) committee has been active and successful in standardizing interfaces in the computer field. The committee is made up of representatives of industry that are interested in each interface. The committee can modify and define the Windows interface to the satisfaction of all major users and make it more efficient and general

so that future applications will not be handicapped by an obsolete interface.

Each corporate member of the committee gets one vote in decision making although they may have more than one representative.

If Microsoft is forced to use the standard interface defined by the ANSI committee for all its application software, it will not have any advantage over its competitors.

I propose this solution to the Microsoft anti-trust remedy. With all application software having to use a standard interface to Windows, all comers can have an equal chance of selling their software without being bullied by the owner of the Windows Operating System.

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